CHAPTER - I

STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF SOUTH AND WEST ASIA FOR THE UNITED STATES

In the post-second World War period the power configuration both at the regional and global levels has witnessed tremendous alterations and thus the concept of strategic significance has also undergone change in that context. Currently the emphasis has shifted from an ex post facto historical approach towards a future predictable analysis. The key emphasis on purely military considerations in the original approach to strategy has now been shifted to the broader concepts of "national security" and "international security".

Strategy has become an integral component of foreign policy. It has emerged as a blend of military and political affairs. Broadly speaking, strategic analysis is policy oriented and provides substantial input into the process of policy formulations at the highest levels. Undoubtedly, the analysis of national security entails the fields of strategic studies and foreign policy and constitutes an integral part of the both. J. Bayli's and others have opined: "If anything, they reflect differences of emphasis rather than differences in subject matter". The term

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"strategy" acquires added significance by providing an opinion for action aimed at the maximization of own values including interests or own position based on an indepth accessment of all potential game and losses as well as the identification of hostile action - which is also called threat perception. This concept of threat perception encompasses the whole threat spectrum. Thus the concept of "strategic significance" which is derivative of the term "strategy is from to be closely linked to perception.".

According to Raymond Aron, the concept of strategic significance is viewed historically in the same light as strategy, that is, in terms of military superiority and the ability to wage war. Broadly speaking, there are three main determinants of strategic significance. In the first place, strategic significance is linked to the sumtotal of a country's capabilities. As Lerche and Said have observed: "It is the general strategic role played by a state in world politics that raises issues of capability in the first place."

Besides, the role perception of the state in the global and regional context is another determinant. "A

second manifestation of the impact of the state's international strategic position upon capability is derived from its interpretation of the position it occupies in the world. Thirdly the perception of other states in the international political system is also significant because this perception determines the strategic significance of a country. As Padleford and Lincoln have observed: "The relations of the states are partly the interaction of the way the people and leaders of one state view the world situation and respond to it, as contrasted with ways the other people and leaders view the same situation and factors. This is in essence the geo-political thinking based on perceptions of the geographical space in the contest of national outlook about the world order. The power and politics is thus viewed in the geographical pattern.

The strategic significance of a country depends on its own national power and capabilities with those of other states which "indicates a relative power relationship and influences the strategic significance of that country. Therefore the strategic significance of

6. Ibid., p. 68.
a country is determined by its own potential capabilities.

The perception based role of states in the international political system, at the global or regional levels which are linked to strategic significance, are not always in agreement with their capabilities. Thus the relative power positions of such countries still depend on the perception of other states in the international system, which is also the result of inter-state interdependence and competition.

It is in this context that the strategic significance of south and West Asian region for United States has been analysed in this chapter. The countries falling within the geographical fold of South Asia and West Asia are about two dozen. Since the emergence of Association of South Asian Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in early 1980s, seven countries comprise South Asia. The West Asian region comprises Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Jordan, Oman, Lebanon, Syria, Muscat, Kuwait, Turkey, Qatar, North Yemen and South Yemen. Syria and Egypt, because of their geo-

10. These countries are India, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives.
12. On 22 May 1990, North Yemen and South Yemen were United to form Yemen Arab Republic.
graphical proximity are also generally identified with West Asia. Similarly Afghanistan is linked with either South Asia or with West Asia or Middle East.

Majority of the countries falling within West and South Asia are either littoral or hinterland countries situated in the Persian Gulf region and Western Indian Ocean region. These are also called Persian Gulf-Western Indian Ocean (PGWIO) region countries. This region assumed tremendous strategic significance in the global U.S. foreign policy in the wake of the Cold War and in view of the geographic proximity of some of the countries like Turkey, Iran with the Soviet Union - the arch rival. Presence of oil in the West Asian region, United State's special relationship with Israel especially in view of the Arab-Israeli hostilities and strategic sea lanes like Persian Gulf, strait of Hormuz etc. have been additional factors that enhanced the strategic significance of this region for the United States.

Until the late 1970s, South Asia and West Asia had been treated as separate regions for strategic analysis vis-a-vis superpowers. However since 1979, the term South West Asia has been used within the United States government.\footnote{13. Bruce R. Kuniholm, "The Carter Doctrine, the Reagan Corollary and Prospects for United States Policy in South-West Asia", \textit{International Journal} (Toronto) Vol. XLI, No. 2, Spring 1986, p. 343.} According to Harold Saunders, the former US assistant
Secretary of state for near Eastern and South Asian affairs, it was no longer possible to allow continued use of "the Middle Eastern problems as synonymous with "the Arab-Israel problem". Thus, the term "South West Asia was introduced to broaden the focus to include the problems of the Persian Gulf and those stemming from the Soviet thrust in to Afghanistan". Saunders further observed: No sharplines can be drawn and that relations of the states in the region with neighbours such as Turkey and India are on occasion important parts of the picture.

Keeping in view the period to be covered in the present study which is from 1968 to 1980, the term South West Asia will not be used as it gained legitimate currency only after 1979. With a view to have indepth analysis of the strategic significance of South and West Asian regions for the United States, it deems advisable to divide this chapter into two main parts:

(A) Strategic significance of South Asia for U.S.; and
(b) strategic significance of West Asia for the United States. A endeavour is also made to analyse the developments that occurred in the respective regions prior to 1968 vis-a-vis the United States.

15. Ibid.
(A) **Strategic Significance of South Asia for U.S.**

A region has a geographical as well as a political connotation and it is something more than a country and less than a continent. In international relations, while analysing a region one is faced with the problem of delineating its geographical perimeter. In certain areas, the problem is relatively simple because geographically it is distinct even as the cultural, ideological and, most importantly, the foreign policy orientations of these areas are clearly distinguishable from the neighbouring areas. However the task becomes simpler when the said area's linkage pattern with the superpowers is more or less uniform, meaning thereby that the constituent states of the area, either on their own volition or under super power influence, subscribe to identical policies towards the one or another as in the case of European Economic Community (EEC) COMECON, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Gulf-Cooperation Council (GCC) etc.\(^\text{16}\).

However in the region of South Asia geographical demarcation are neither clear-cut nor the foreign policy orientations of the countries falling within the region are symmetrical. In recent years some western scholars have

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indulged in committing academic fallacy of treating all countries belonging to the so-called South and Southeast Asia as belonging to one single region. According to Parth S. Ghosh, the South Asia Institute of the Heidelberg University in West Germany subscribes to "fallacy". Even scholars like Howard Wriggins and James Guyot have also treated South and Southeast Asia as the same. In the introduction to their jointly edited book, the scholars clarified that since countries belonging to both south and Southeast Asian regions had fallen within the scope of the book they had chosen to use the expression "Southern" and not "South" in the title to their book. However since the formation of ASEAN and SAARC, this controversy seems to have been put to rest. For the purpose of present study, South Asia region is taken as denoted by the SAARC. In other words, South Asia comprises India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Maldives.

While analysing US strategy towards South Asia prior to 1968, it should be noted that prime actors in regional politico-strategic scenario towards which American policy was directed were India and Pakistan. During this period,

17. Ibid., p. 5.

Bangladesh constituted a part of Pakistan and was known as East Pakistan, and there was almost little interaction between United States and other countries of South Asia during this period.

Partition of the Indian sub-continent in August 1947 in the wake of British withdrawal led to emergence of India and Pakistan as two independent and sovereign countries. India shared borders with Pakistan, China, Burma, Nepal and Bhutan along with sea coast in Indian Ocean. Pakistan shared land borders with Afghanistan, India, Iran, and China. In the immediate aftermath of the partition, both India and Pakistan had developed some irritants especially with regard to the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India, Pakistan was disinclined to accept India's claim that Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India while India rejected Pakistan's demand that the future of Jammu and Kashmir should be decided on the basis of the plebiscite.

Thus in view of contradictory positions on Jammu and Kashmir, the relations between India and Pakistan remained strained. The partition of the Indian sub-continent took place at a time when the global political scenario in the post-world war period had been embroiled in Cold War hotly chased by United States and Soviet Union. Entertaining few illusions during the war about making the
world safe for democracy, leadership in Washington hoped that a peaceful world order could be built upon the post-war cooperation of the victorious allies.\(^19\)

The Wartime close cooperation between Washington and Moscow turned into a bitter rivalry in the immediate aftermath of the conclusion of Second World War. The growing Soviet influence in Eastern Europe and elsewhere created apprehensions in Washington about impending Soviet domination and expansion of communism. Consequently Truman administration through a declaration made by US President, Harry Truman in early March 1947, committed the United States to the defence of democratic nations everywhere in the World "against direct or indirect aggression" and against subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.\(^20\) This also came to be known as Truman Doctrine.

During the early years of Cold War, the US foreign policy veered round five main planks - Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, containment, alliances and foreign aid - which were adhered to thwart Soviet endeavours to expand its sphere of influence as well as to stem the tide of expanding communism. The Truman Doctrine was supplemented


by policy of containment. With a view to implement this policy, Washington embarked on a policy of re-armament and based troops on foreign soil. It had also drawn around itself a network of alliances 21.

Under the Marshall Plan, United States followed a programme of development of the countries in Europe by an economic programme of self-help coupled with US assistance and laid the basis for the integration of much of the world economy on American terms to maximum extent 22. By floating military alliances in Europe through North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other military pacts in various regions, United States aimed at bringing the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. Through these alliances, the United States obligated its allies to cooperate with Washington 23 and it also served as a useful restraint on allies provided the United States an access to and influence on governments with potentially disruptive local grievances and ambitions 24.


Because of antagonism between India and Pakistan mainly on the question of Kashmir, Pakistan was looking for a powerful ally. Besides, the force behind Pakistan's establishment was based very largely "on a feeling of insecurity". Following the advent of communist regime in September 1949 in People's Republic of China, Washington's strategic interests in countries geographically contiguous to Soviet Union and People's Republic of China (PRC) were enhanced.

The US stakes and interests in South Asia were, to a great extent, dictated by its global strategy that witnessed shifts and departures in accordance with the response and reactions of Soviet Union and PRC to the contemporary developments obtaining in the region. The pace, degree and direction of American presence building in South Asia was largely dependent on the diplomatic and strategic manoeuvres adhered to by Moscow and Beijing in the region. The assessment of strategic objectives in South Asia prompted the United States to "include Pakistan in the conception of containment" as a component of its global strategy. India's reluctance to be a satellite or temporary ally persuaded Washington to find in


Pakistan a manageable ally. Besides, the United States could foresee in geographical location of Pakistan: "evident strategic advantages in meeting supposed threats from USSR and People's Republic of China."

By the onset of 1950s, India had categorically declined American overtures of joining US sponsored military alliances directed against Soviet Union and China. Even prior to India's attainment of independence, Jawaharlal Nehru as the Vice-President of the Interim Government had said on 7 September 1946:

"We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale...

This connotation of keeping away from power politics of groups gained the currency of policy of non-alignment. Hence India, after attaining independence pursued the policy of non-alignment initially when the United States evinced interest in cultivating India as its ally against communism in the region, then India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru not only spurned

the American overtures but declared India's steadfast commitment to the principles of non-alignment. However in Pakistan, the US found a willing ally which readily accepted America's friendship because of its weak position and fear of India.

Pakistan had developed disenchantment with U.K. led commonwealth and the Soviet Union, with the former because it had allowed India to become its member\(^\text{30}\) and with the latter because the Pakistani intellectuals regarded Moscow to be an inferior country as compared with the United States\(^\text{31}\). Besides, the leadership in Pakistan viewed Soviet Union as a threat to Islam which was its *raison d'être* and way of life\(^\text{32}\). Some sections in Pakistan also believed that their religion did not allow them to forge an alliance with Moscow\(^\text{33}\).

Pakistan's leadership unequivocally solicited American help by pointed out mutuality of interests and strategic significance of Pakistan for United States. During his visit to the United States in 1950, the then Premier of Pakistan had said that he had come to "assist America to discover


Pakistan. While emphasising the ideological and strategic significance of his country, the Pakistani Premier said that Pakistan would throw all its weight to help the maintenance of "stability in Asia\(^34\)."

During 1951, the US administration mooted the idea of proposing arms sales to Pakistan and in December 1951, the Pentagon sanctioned its approval to the US state Department for discussion with Pakistan for arms and agreement which had become propitious by mid 1952. However the deal could not be carried following its premature leakage. The senior American diplomats and analysts like Chester Bowles and George F. Kennan disapproved US policy, of arming Pakistan. For, in their opinion, India's non-aligned policy was neither antithetical to the US interests in Asia nor was an obstacle in the fulfilment of its global objectives\(^36\). According to William J. Barnds, the key policy-makers and analysts in Washington felt that the decision to supply arms to Pakistan "would be exacerbating the tense relations between India and Pakistan, partly by upsetting the balance of power and partly by adding differences over their approaches to the cold war, to their already formidable antagonisms\(^37\)."

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35. Ibid.
36. Quoted the B.M. Jain, South Asia, India and United States (Jaipur, R.B.S.A. Publishers 1987), p. 36.
37. Barnds, n. 19 p. 92
The tangible outcome of this opposition by leading diplomats became discernible when this decision was deferred for sometime. However, the advent of Republican administration under President Eisenhower with John Foster Dulles as Secretary of State marked the revival of American proposal to supply arms to Pakistan. Dulles expressed his open hostility to "uncommitted nations" and offered full military assistance to those who were willing to acquiesce in US strategy of building a "cordon sanitaire" against communism in different regions of the world.

India had already expressed its opposition to American sponsored military alliances in the region. The then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, viewed the US policy of arming Pakistan as a calculated move to contain India. However he made it categorical that despite U.S. decision to supply arms to Pakistan, India would not deviate from its path of the policy of non-alignment.

Despite domestic criticism, the then U.S. Vice-President, Richard Nixon strongly recommended military assistance to Pakistan as a counter-weight to the "confirmed neutralism" of India.38

Despite India's apprehensions and strong opposition, both Washington and Islamabad became allies by signing the Mutual Arms Assistance Treaty on 19 May 1954 under which the United States undertook to give military equipment and training to Pakistan's armed forces. During 1954 Washington also succeeded in wooing Pakistan to join South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). While spelling out the inherent dangers of the SEATO pact, Prime Minister Nehru said:

"But after reading the SEATO Treaty carefully I feel that its whole approach is wrong and dangerous from point of view of any Asian country... countries in Asia as well outside may have certain justifiable fears... But the approach of the Treaty is wrong and may antagonise a great part of Asia. Are you going to have peace and security by creating more conflicts and antagonisms and by making people think that instead of bringing security, you bring insecurity into the region."

Prime Minister Nehru had expressed his apprehension that the military pact would extend its nature and scope beyond its jurisdiction which proved true when in the council meeting of SEATO in Karachi in March 1956, Pakistan raised the issue of Kashmir. India's protest in this

39. For text see, Department of State Bulletin, 31 May 1954, p. 850.
40. Nehru, n. 29, p. 89.
41. B.M. Jain, n. 36, p. 37.
regard was ignored by Pakistan. Dan Haendal observed that such a behaviour on the part of Pakistan clearly indicated that it had joined an alliance with the U.S. primarily in order to arm itself against India and to secure its support over Kashmir\(^42\)\(^\text{a}\). In 1955, Pakistan joined the Baghdad pact, later known as Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)\(^43\).

Pakistan’s bilateral treaty with the United States and former’s membership of SEATO and CENTO made it eligible to receive massive arms and economic assistance from Washington which poured into Pakistan between 1954-65 uninterruptedly. Leadership in New Delhi had expressed apprehensions that any aid provided to Pakistan would increase the dangers of war over Kashmir and result in an arms race in the sub-continent and would have an impact on India’s policy towards Pakistan and the United States. In spite of Washington’s assurance that “its aid to Pakistan was not directed against India”\(^44\). New Delhi regarded it


as the main cause of India's insecurity and an irritant in its relations with Pakistan. However, India had made it clear that the Mutual Defence Treaty between US and Pakistan did not guarantee that Pakistan would not use the weapons secured through the United States against India.

On having been assured by Washington that its agreement with Pakistan was not directed against India, Prime Minister Nehru did not believe that the intention of the US military aid to Pakistan was to cause trouble to India. However, Nehru doubted the Pakistani motives as spokesmen of the Pakistan Government had stated that their objective in entering into a defence agreement with the United States was to strengthen Pakistan against India. Prime Minister Nehru could foresee the impending threat to India's security in view of induction of sophisticated US arms into Pakistan, when he said: "The military aid to Pakistan by America is a step towards war, not peace, not only towards a world war, but a step which will bring war right to our frontiers... It is an anti-Asian step."

47. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. 27, 13 March 1958, Col. 6153.
During 1954 and 1962, Pakistan received generous arms assistance from the United States. For lack of basic infrastructure to manufacture sophisticated military weapons and equipment and its quest for armaments prompted Pakistan to acquire arms from the United States. Between 1956 and 1962, Washington provided a large number of armoured vehicles and aircraft and some naval vessels and missiles to Pakistan, as shown in the following table:

**Table 1.1**

**US ARMS AID TO PAKISTAN, 1956-62**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weapon</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aircraft</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lockheed RT. 33.A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1956-58</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>NAF-86 F Sabre</td>
<td>MAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lockheed RT-33A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Martin B-57B Canberra</td>
<td>MAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1958-62</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Cessnao-1 Bridging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bell 47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1960-62</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sikorsky S-55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Naval Vessels</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coastal Minesweeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coastal Minesweeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Coastal Minesweeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Destroyer CH Class</td>
<td>USA/U.K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Coastal Minesweeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is evident from the above table that Pakistan acquired sophisticated aircraft and missiles from the United States and thus modernised its airforce.

The outbreak of Sino-India war in October 1962 brought a temporary lull in US-Pakistan relations especially when the United States along with U.K. offered India military and economic assistance to meet the Chinese challenge. The sympathetic attitude of the Kennedy administration towards India during the Sino-Indian hostilities was regarded by Pakistan as visible signs of the new Administration's special concern for India.48

According to American sources from 1947 to 1963, the United States had given India aid of about $4,718 million of which $60 million was military aid, $2,225 million food for peace, $1,890 million economic assistance under AID, $311 million export-import loans and $232 million miscellaneous and other economic aid whereas Pakistan's total economic aid during this period amounted to $2,227 million and its military aid was about $1,500 million.

The then US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk had asserted that the emergency commitment to India by the United States in response to India's call for help was about $60 million. It was provided only for the purpose of defence against communist aggression and not to be used against Pakistan. On 29 January 1963, a commonwealth/U.S. Air Defence Mission visited India to examine with the Indian Air Force, the problems and technical requirements involved in organizing an effective defence against the possibility of any further Chinese aggression. A team of American defence experts also visited India in February 1963 to

consult the India authorities about India's programme of expansion of the defence production capabilities to meet its increased requirements. The governments of United States and U.K. had also agreed on certain measures to strengthen India's defence against possible air attack on India by China. But in return for aid to India, Washington had tried to influence India's policy of non-alignment. India, however, refused to be influenced by American, the American request to install a high-power transmitter by Voice of America was not fulfilled and it also did not accept the American nuclear umbrella on the plea that it would be against the policy of non-alignment.

India's decision not to toe US line as a precondition to acquire sophisticated military equipment had irked the Kennedy administration which became reluctant to provide arms assistance to India. The Indian demand for fourteen squadrons of U.S. fighter planes and three squadrons of bombers was rejected by Washington. Instead, United States offered joint air exercise as being favourable to both sides. The underlying objective behind this American offer was to reduce U.S. military burden whereas for India

it have been an inexpensive plan requiring not huge army. However India's main objection to this offer was that the United States would control all moves and all technicians and pilots would be Americans. \(^{55}\)

The volume and quantum of military assistance which India acquired from the United States in the wake of Sino-Indian war was not only nominal but insufficient to cope with the defence requirements needed to face the Chinese threat. Even the little aid offered to India by the United States became an eyesore for Pakistani leaders. Pakistan blamed India and considered it as an "aggressor". \(^{56}\) The United States was also criticised for having not consulted Pakistan prior to providing American military assistance to India. The then President of Pakistan, Mohammad Ayub Khan, told the Pakistan National Assembly on 21 November 1962: "One of our allies had promised us that we would be consulted before any arms assistance is given to India. I regret to have to observe that this was not done. In so far as the other friendly countries are concerned their action in arming India to the teeth is bound to have the effect of encouraging India to engage in a major conflict.\(^{57}\)."

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However, the United States did not take a serious note of Pakistan criticism and stuck to its policy of strengthening India against China, for it saw it as a means of stemming the tide of Chinese expansionism in South Asia. Pakistan started hobnobbing with Beijing to develop close relations with the latter. Though Washington disapproved to growing *entente cordiale* between Islamabad and Beijing but at the same time, Washington did not want to lose its leverage on Pakistan. Washington reacted sharply to Sino-Pakistan air agreement by ordering the indefinite holding-up of the promised $4.3 million loan to Pakistan for air-fields. However it did not cut off the supply of military assistance to Pakistan.

As shown in Table 1.2, Pakistan received Lockheed and Starfighter aircraft from the United States between 1962-65 along with NWs side winder missiles. However during the 1965 Indo-Pak War, the United States placed an embargo on the supply of military equipment to both India and Pakistan. The then US President Lydon B. Johnson said on 29 November 1965 that neither military nor economic aid would be renewed until several condition including India and Pakistan to work out a basis for living in peace and that Pakistan's ties with Beijing should be limited, were met.

By 1965, Pakistan had six infantry and two armoured division of sophisticated Patton tanks which had been supplied to Pakistan by American and CENTO sources, whereas India had to suffer because of this embargo as six shiploads of defence material from the U.S. bound for India was ordered to return just 15 miles from the Indian shores. However, this arms embargo did not last long. Within six months, a partial lift on ban was ordered to permit the sale of non-lethal items on cash or credit basis subject to a case by case review and that too only spare parts for previously supplied American equipment. The reason given for this was that if United States did not continue this sale, Pakistan would try to get it from other countries and this would weaken Pakistan's economy whereas the US objectives was political stability and economic advancement of Pakistan.

Table 1. shows the U.S. arms assistance to Pakistan between 1962 to 1968 as follows:


63. Ibid., p. 57.
Table 1.2
U.S. Arms Assistance to Pakistan, 1962-68

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weapon</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft</td>
<td>1960-62</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sikorsky S-55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lockheed F-104B</td>
<td>Starfighter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Starfighter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grummon HU-16A</td>
<td>Albataross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lockheed C-103E</td>
<td>Hercules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kaman HH-43B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Cessna T-37B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lockheed C-130E</td>
<td>Hercules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval Vessels</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coastal Minesweeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oiler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coastal Minesweeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The United States spend enormous amount of money on arming Pakistan. The first priority was given to Air Force. A large number of supersonic fighters and bombers were supplied to Pakistan. Before 1965, Pakistan received 30 B-57 bombers,
20 F-140 supersonic starfighters and 120 F-86 supersonic sabre jets.

In response to repeated demands from Pakistan, Washington lifted the embargo on the sale of non-lethal items. This was followed by a modification in US aid policy to permit the sale of ammunition and spare parts for the military equipments, aircraft and tanks supplied by USA to Pakistan prior to the 1965 Indo-Pak hostilities. Further modification in its policy of arms supplies to the Indian sub-continent was envisaged in April 1967 when the United States further announced that it would resume the sale of "non-lethal" arms to both Pakistan and India.65

According to Coughlin, in March 1968, the U.S. Government quietly approved the sale of "lethal" arms to Pakistan. The arrangement called for several Italian firms to provide Pakistan with 100 refurbished Sherman tanks.66 The then US. Secretary of Defence also informed the Foreign Affairs Committee that the United States was only shipping spare parts for lethal as well as non-lethal items, to both India and Pakistan, "but we do not directly ship lethal items to

either country under our present policy. This indicated the transfer of arms through third countries.

On the basis of above analysis, it may not seen out of place to surmise that because of Pakistan's strategic location and its own readiness to accept American arms assistance to have strategic parity with India, that the United States evinced keen interest in Pakistan. Pakistan served as an ideal base for the execution of the American foreign policy objectives of "containing" Soviet Union and China as Pakistan lay below Russia's belly and had a contiguous boundary with China. Pakistan stands across the great mountain passes through which all land invasions of the Indian sub-continent had taken place in the past. Hence Pakistan, the American view, provided a gateway to South Asia and Washington deemed it essential to make Pakistan strong and stable. Another reason that promoted the United States to cultivate Pakistan was the fact that the latter was situated between South-East Asia and the Middle East, thus acting as a bridge between these two regions of the world.

69. Mohammad Ayub Khan, No. 43, p. 192.
Another factor that prompted Washington to prefer Pakistan in South Asia for strategic reasons was the near geographic proximity of Pakistan to Soviet Union where from the United State could have aerial surveillance over Soviet territory without any fear of being detected. Pakistan could also be used for air operations because the new industrial centre of the Soviet Union were only 1,700 miles from Quetta in Pakistan whereas 4,000 miles from the US bases in Morocco and 2,700 miles from U.S. bases in Italy. Strategic planners in Washington also wanted to ensure continued access to strategic mineral and raw material resources through sea lanes of the Indian Ocean by keeping Pakistan within its fold. The American capitalist-bureaucrats combine had whipped up anti-communist hysteria to make defence expenditure psychologically tolerable to the public and to ensure regular supply of raw material for the production of deadly weapons. And Pakistan was regarded by the United States as a country which could be of use for protecting access to raw material such as oil, tin and rubber.

72. Ibid., p. 129.
It is evident from the above analysis that in the South Asia region, the United States perceived Indian subcontinent as of tremendous strategic significance in its policy of containment of Soviet Union and China. India's commitment to the policy of non-alignement thwarted American manoeuvres to cultivate India as its ally against communism. However Pakistan filled up that role because in its antagonism against India and its quest for having arms parity with the latter brought Pakistan closer to the United States. Thus Pakistan received massive fiscal and military assistance from the United States between 1954 and 1968. During this period, Pakistan served the strategic interests of the United States in South Asia.

(B) STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF WEST ASIA FOR UNITED STATES:

In common parlance in international relations, the region of West Asia is generally understood in terms of Arab-Israel conflict with Israel in major focus and peripheral Arab countries like Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon as other countries of importance. For the purpose of present study, the countries falling in the Persian Gulf are also included for analysing U.S. strategy in the region, special focus will be on Israel, Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia while interpreting the developments. However, the connotations "West Asia will be used in broader perspective."
Since the advent of cold war till 1968, West Asia had strategic significance for United States mainly on four counts: (i) presence of Israel in the region and US commitment to it; (ii) presence of petroleum and its immense strategic significance for the United States and its Western allies, (iii) Vulnerability of the region to Soviet influence and geographic contiguity of countries like Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan to Soviet Union, and (iv) strategic significance of sea lanes of communications (SLOCs) like Suez Canal, Straits of Hormuz and Persian Gulf for the United States to counter Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean.

In proper West Asian region which is generally described as the terms of Arab-Israel conflict, the US policy was mainly guided by Washington's commitment to Israel and the presence of Soviet influence in the region. Saudi Arabia and Jordan depended on US while Egypt and Syria developed close relations with Soviet Union. This aspect is analysed in succeeding pages.

As far as Gulf region is concerned its prominence in US global strategy is fairly a phenomenon of recent origin. Although Washington recognized the importance of the region as part of a landbridge between three continents, its proximity to the Soviet Union and its in increasingly significant contribution to the world supply of petroleum,
the Gulf did not become a primary zone in American strategic planning until the 1970s.

The early American involvement in the region was in trade or the activities of US Christian missions in education and health. The first major element of American interest in the region was introduced by the U.S. oil companies during the inter-war period by 1939 with half-ownership of a concessions in Kuwait and exclusive concessions in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. The second world war brought into focus the strategic importance of petroleum and its by-products as "foundations of the ability to fight a modern war."

Keeping in view the vast petroleum reserves in the Gulf region, strategic planners in Washington realized that the Gulf oil, could serve as a "well head" for European recovery as well as for U.S. domestic consumption so that depleting indigenous reserves could be saved for future requirements. In the immediate aftermath of the second


world war, under the Truman doctrine, containment of Soviet influence and the preservation of local conservative regimes also prompted United States to actively involve itself in the region.

During the cold war years, Iran and Saudi Arabia 'forged' closer relations with the United States and Under the Truman doctrine, Iran, because of its geographic contiguity and Shah of Iran's soliciting American assistance to tighten his grip over power brought Iran much closer to Washington. While briefing congressional leaders on Truman administrations to combat the communist threat to Greece and the Middle East, the then US Under Secretary of State, Dean Acheson had said: ".... like apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one, the corruption of Greece would infect Iran and all to the east\(^80\). On the other hand Saudi Arabia agreed to provide base rights to the United States at Dhahran—an airfield built by the United States to facilitate redeployment of U.S. forces to and from the Far East\(^81\).

**OIL FACTORS:**

In the post-second World War period imported oil assumed tremendous strategic significance for the economic


\(^{81}\) Hurewitz, n. 75 pp. 323-329.
security and well being of United States and other western
countries. In 1950, oil accounted for about 30 (per cent)
of the combined energy requirements of North America,
Western Europe and Japan. By 1973 the figure was about
53 (per cent)\textsuperscript{82}. By 1979, 45 (Per cent) of the United States,
55 (per cent) of the EEC's and 70 per cent of Japan's
energy consumption was through Oil\textsuperscript{83}. Consequently, the
world in general and industrialized countries in particular,
became heavily dependent as import of oil from the Gulf
region to meet their energy requirements. The increase in
oil consumption in the western countries led to their
augmented dependence on imports as the domestic oil produc­
tion proved insufficient to meet the required consumption.
During 1950, United States was world's largest producer of
petroleum and in 1960 its dependence on oil import was 16
per cent which reached to 35 (per cent) by 1973 when the
first energy crisis surfaced\textsuperscript{84}. Subsequent years witnessed
increased American dependence on oil import.

\textsuperscript{82} United States, Project Independence: US and World
Energy outlook through 1990 (Washington Congressional

\textsuperscript{83} U.S. Petroleum Imports from the Gulf: Use of Armed
Force to ensure supplies (Washington: Congressional

\textsuperscript{84} Henry Kissinger, "Energy-the Necessity of Decision"
in Richard P. Stteabins and Elaine P. Adam (eds.),
American Foreign Relations 1975: A Documentary Record
Increase in consumption levels and import dependence prompted both developed and developing countries of the world to turn towards Persian Gulf region which had sufficient oil reserves and which could accommodate any sudden rises in the global demand for petroleum. The eight oil producing countries of the Persian Gulf region hold about 55 (per cent) of the world's total proven crude oil reserves, as shown in the following table 1.3.

Table 1.3
Estimates Persian Gulf Crude Oil and Natural Gas Proven Reserves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Crude Oil (billion barrels)</th>
<th>Natural Gas (trillion cubic feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>165.3</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emerites</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, Persian Gulf</td>
<td>367.5</td>
<td>768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Total</td>
<td>670.2</td>
<td>3,034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Gulf region has also emerged as the world's largest oil-producing region. During 1950, the countries in Gulf region produced only about 17 (per cent) of the total world crude output and in 1975 they were accounting for about 35(per cent) of the same as shown in the following table 1.4.

Table 1.4
Percentage of World Crude Oil Production by region 1950-1978

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>54.56</td>
<td>37.24</td>
<td>24.86</td>
<td>19.83</td>
<td>18.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>16.94</td>
<td>16.47</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>5.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>8.72</td>
<td>16.75</td>
<td>16.87</td>
<td>20.30</td>
<td>22.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>13.25</td>
<td>9.37</td>
<td>10.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia, Middle East</td>
<td>19.34</td>
<td>28.17</td>
<td>34.23</td>
<td>43.02</td>
<td>42.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERSSIAN GULF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td>10.01</td>
<td>8.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>12.89</td>
<td>14.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total World Production</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Owing to low levels of industrialization and little domestic consumption, much of the output of crude oil in the Persian Gulf region was available for exports. By the close of 1970s, the Gulf region had become the supplier of about two-thirds of total world-wide oil import requirements. Oil being crucial factor in US and western countries economy and Persian Gulf being the main source of oil, the region was and is undoubtedly of immense strategic significance for the United States. Any disruption in the flow of oil from the Gulf could severely affect basic U.S. economic and strategic interests. Politically, oil shortages could cause severe strains in the Western alliance system. It was all too evident in the aftermath of 1973-74 oil crisis, the leading example being the refusal of almost all European allies to allow overflight rights to U.S. aircraft carrying equipment.

and supplies to Israel during the October 1973 war.\textsuperscript{88}

The role of the countries of Persian Gulf region in global politics and American policy concerns came to acquire commercial and financial dimensions. The U.S. oil multinationals operating in the Gulf countries involved combined capital investments around $3.5 billion in 1974. The replacement value of U.S. company investments in the Gulf oil industry was estimated at some $50 billion in 1972 and yearly income from these investment was equal to half of the U.S. balance of payment deficit at that time.\textsuperscript{89} Thus the U.S. had high economic stakes in the Gulf.

The oil revenues of the oil producing Gulf countries had seen a sudden boom. The combined oil revenues of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, UAE and Qatar rose from $7 billion in 1971 to more than $72 billion in 1974 and $185 billion in 1980.\textsuperscript{90} This oil boom boosted domestic consumer spending and the governments of these countries launched ambitious socio-economic programmes. The combined import bills of the Gulf states including two Yemens rose from $8.7 billion in

\textsuperscript{88} Chris L. Jefferies, "NATO and Oil: Conflict and capabilities" \textit{Air University Review}, January-February 1980, pp. 35-46.


1973 to $13.5 billion in 1974 which included arms imports, thus making the region the "fastest growing market for U.S. goods and services in the world"\(^9\). In 1973, the U.S. state Department told the congress:

"... Gulf is an area which will provide almost unlimited opportunities for the sale of every kind of U.S. goods and services. This is an area which is ideally complementary to the high technology and management services that the United States provide"\(^9\).

Another factor which proved instrumental in augmenting the strategic significance of Gulf region in U.S. global policy was the increasing Soviet naval presence in Western Indian Ocean in the wake of British withdrawal from the region by the close of 1960s. The British withdrawal had an impact on the politico-strategic elements of the American interests in the Persian Gulf. These elements, while possessing an importance of their own, became more central to U.S. regional concerns given their bearing on the flow of oil. In March 1968, reports regarding Soviet naval excursions in to the waters of the Indian Ocean and Persian


Gulf appeared in Western press\textsuperscript{93}. In April 1968, the then U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East, Lucius Battle told the House of Representatives, Foreign Affairs Committee, "the temptation on the part of the Soviets to fill a vacuum or at least manoeuvre in the troubled waters is very great\textsuperscript{94}". The House Committee further apprised by the commander of the U.S. Strike Force that the Soviet action reflected an age-old strategy, not new but increasing in intensity and activity of penetration of the Middle East, particularly the oil-rich areas of the Persian Gulf\textsuperscript{95}. The American perceptions about Soviet manoeuvres became more entrenched as the Soviets gained foothold in Iraq, Ethiopia and South Yemen prompting fears in the United States of a Soviet geopolitical offensive with the Gulf region supposedly a prime target\textsuperscript{96}.

The growing role of oil-producing Gulf countries in the Arab-Israel conflict especially after 1973 war had also prompted Washington to take note of this new development while formulating its policy towards West Asia. As Joseph Sisco, an

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{93} \textit{New York Times}, 15 March 1968.
\item \textsuperscript{94} \textit{Middle East Record}, Vol. 4, 1968, p. 3.
\item \textsuperscript{95} Ibid., Vol. 5, 1968-69, p. 463.
\item \textsuperscript{96} Amitava Acharya, n. p. 14.
\end{itemize}
official of the U.S. State Department noted in 1975: "The major oil producing countries of the Arabian Peninsula have become the principal financial support for the Arab states, more directly involved in the Middle East conflict.... their views (on the Arab-Israeli issue) are very important and they are regularly consulted by the Arab parties to the peace negotiations as well as by the Palestinians." 97.

**THE US AND ISRAEL**:

Israel and Iran had been main pawns in chessboard of strategy towards West Asia. And the single most significant factor complicating American policy towards West Asia has been continuing US support to Israel. Washington played a crucial role in the establishment of the state of Israel in May 1948. The territory known as Palestine was brought under the British mandate following the collapse of Ottoman Empire after the First world War. During the period of British mandate of Palestine, the Jews migrated to Palestine from different parts of the world and settled there. The unabated inflex of Jews into Palestine proved instrumental in upsetting the ethnic balance which led to eruption of violence between the Jews and the Arab Palestinian. In November 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution envisaging partition of Palestine into (1) Jewish state and (ii) Arab State.

However the Jews unilaterally declared on 14 May 1948, the establishment of state of Israel. United States was the first country to accord recognition to the Jewish state. Soon hostilities broke out between Israel and Arab states but owing to US role, a cease-fire was obtained through the United Nations. The native Arab Palestinians were forced to become refugees who sought shelter in the neighbouring Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and other countries. The continued American support to Israel, Arab countries hostility towards Israel and the plight of Palestinian refugees who formed Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as their sole representative to regain their homeland were such developments which gave rise to Arab-Israel problem.

In the wake of Cold War, Washington did not show much eagerness to provide massive military aid to Israel keeping in view the fact that such a step would not only antagonise the Arab countries but push them to Soviet orbit. During early 1950s, the United States mooted a plan for the defence of the Middle East. But Egypt which was considered key to the proposed security system rejected the proposal. The then US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles in the Eisenhower

administration, emphasised on American impartiality in Arab-Israeli dispute\(^99\). Dulless further added: "The United States should seek to allay the deep resentment against it that has resulted from the creation of Israel. In the past, we had good relation within the Arab peoples......today the Arab peoples are afraid that the United States will back the new state of Israel in aggressive expansionism. We cannot afford to be destructed by millions who could be sturdy friends of freedom\(^100\)."

However there was substantial difference in theory and practice with regard to American policy toward Israel. At the theoretical level Washington pursued the policy of appeasing Arab countries and on occasions even snubbed Israel but in practice obliged Tel Aviv by providing massive economic and military assistance as shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Aid</th>
<th>Economic Loans</th>
<th>Economic Grants</th>
<th>Military Loans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>01.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{100}\) Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>US Aid</th>
<th>Israel Aid</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>United States and Israel p. 278.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>126.8</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


With regard to such massive US aid to Israel, Nadav Safran, a prominent scholar of Israeli affairs commented: "On a per capital basis of the recipient country, this is probably the highest rate of American aid given to any country. It is evident from the above table that there was substantial rise in American economic assistance to Israel during 1950s and 1960s. Besides, during 1960-67, United States also provided

101. Nadav Safran, United States and Israel p. 278.
military loans to Israel worth $137.3 million to enable it procure sophisticated weapons from the American market.
During Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Washington adopted a policy of "special relationship" with Israel. Abba Eban wrote of Johnson that "within a few months he had established with Prime Minister Levi Eshkol the kind of ultimate confidence that had never existed between heads of Israeli and American governments." Shimon Peres, then deputy Defence Minister of Israel, wrote that Eshkol reported that US President Johnson had told Israel Premier: "The United States stands four square behind Israel", that American would "not be idle if Israel is attacked and that this pledge given by both his predecessor and himself, was a solemn and serious commitment." 

It could be evidenced from the above analysis that Israel was one of the important decisive factor in making West Asia strategically significant for the United States.

United States and Iran:

Because of its oil reserves, strategic location of sharing over 1000 miles long border with Soviet Union and Shah of Iran's dependence on US for his survival were the

main factors that proved helpful in forging special relationship between Tehran and Washington. At an early stage, the Shah was forced to realize that his own perceptions as to the strategic importance of Iran to the United States and to the West and the means of safeguarding this "shield of the Middle East" were at odds with US policy. Even in 1947, barely a year after the Soviet "puppet regime had been driven out of Azerbaijan, the US Department of State had considered that, for military assistance purposes, Iran could not be considered amongst those states that were vital to US security or under direct or immediate danger. The restoration of monarchy in August 1953 in a pro-Shah coup in which the government of Mossadeq was overthrown with the considerable planning and financial assistance provided by the United States, the relations between Iran and US started registering an upward trend.

According to C.D. Carr, the Shah of Iran needed to achieve certain goals in relation to the US foreign policy: he had to establish the importance of Iran to the United States, the importance of himself to Iran, and the importance


105. Ibid.

of Iranian security in terms of members of armed forces personnel and the quality of their equipment to himself. In view of Shah's return to power in August 1953, Washington realized that the Shah would need tangible support from the United States, in terms of both economic and military assistance, to retain his grip over power. Consequently, the US military assistance to Iran increased five fold from 1952 to 1953 with a similar increase in non-military aid. During 1954-55, when United States advocated the formation of regional military alliances, especially CENTO and SEATO, Washington advised Tehran to join CENTO which was earlier called the Baghdad Pact which Iran joined in 1955. As the then US ambassador in Tehran reported in 1959: The Baghdad Pact has meant nothing to the people or government of Iran other than the strong hope of massive aid/or territorial guarantee from the US in return for Iranian adherence to the pact. Between 1946-48 to 1967, Iran received substantial economic and military assistance from the United States, as shown in the following table:

108. Cited in Ibid, p. 64.
Table 1.6
U.S. Economic and Military Assistance to Iran 1946-1967
($ million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Economic Assistance</th>
<th>Military Assistance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946-48</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953-61</td>
<td>617.7</td>
<td>410.0</td>
<td>1027.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>133.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>101.3</td>
<td>144.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>122.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>152.7</td>
<td>175.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>107.1</td>
<td>195.7</td>
<td>302.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It is amply clear from the above table that the military component of US assistance for Iran was greater especially from 1962 onwards than the economic assistance.

It was in this backdrop that the strategic interests and stakes in West Asian and Gulf region blossomed. It is
evident from the above analysis that the tangible outcome of the developments relating to oil, trade, finance, fear of Soviet expansion and the growing role of the West Asian and the Gulf states in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, that the region acquired pre-eminent significance for the United States political, economic and strategic terms. In 1972, Joseph Sisco, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs had noted the spectacular... transition of the gulf from.... a position of international significance primarily as part of the British lifetime to India to position on strategic significance and economic importance to many industrial countries\textsuperscript{109}.

The advent of Islamic revolution in Iran in early 1979, served a severe blow to US strategic interests in Iran. However the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and its continued occupation revived keen American interests in South and West Asia and the US preferred to call it South West Asia. With the loss of Iran as a strategic ally, Washington pinned its hopes on Pakistan. These developments were taken note of by the US policy makers. In early 1980, the then Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Harold Saunders, described US interests in the Gulf as "longstanding, major and inter

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related. While listing the factors affecting U.S. interests in the region, Saunders said:

(i) The area's strategic location and its significance to maintaining a global strategic balance;

(ii) The significance we place on the sovereignty and independence of these countries as part of a more stable world;

(iii) The world's vital need for the region's oil and

(iv) The importance of these states in international finance and development and as markets for our goods and technology.

The U.S. interests and policy objectives in the region as outlined by Saunders, were also reiterated by the U.S. Defence Secretary, Harold Brown in 1980:

To maintain access to adequate oil supplies;
To resist Soviet expansion;
To promote stability in the region; and to advance the middle east peace process and indeed inorder to help insure-the continued security of Israel.

Thus the U.S. policy towards South and West Asia was primarily governed by these broad guidelines.

110. US. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations War in the Gulf (Washington 1984), p. 35.